

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 1159

By Parkinson

A RESOLUTION to honor and thank Kimberlee Morton for her inspiring example.

WHEREAS, it is fitting that this General Assembly should recognize those inspirational Tennesseans who have overcome great personal tragedy to find happiness and success later in life while also providing an example worthy of emulation; and

WHEREAS, native Memphian Kimberlee Morton is one such worthy Tennessean; she nearly died on November 19, 1998, but has since turned her life around and continues to inspire countless fellow citizens with her story and example; and

WHEREAS, on that fateful day, Kimberlee was brutally raped, burned, and almost killed by a neighbor whom she regarded as a friend; and

WHEREAS, suffering from severe blood loss and second degree burns over 50 percent of her body, Kimberlee was rushed to the hospital where she remained in critical condition for several days; and

WHEREAS, Kimberlee was subsequently moved to the burn unit where she underwent physical therapy that was excruciatingly painful; she even had to rely on her family and friends to wash her face and brush her teeth; and

WHEREAS, Kimberlee benefited from the encouragement and kindness of several nurses at the hospital, and she worked hard, both mentally and physically, to return to normal; and

WHEREAS, although she is much too modest to say so, Kimberlee emerged from this frightful ordeal a better person; and

WHEREAS, her inspiring story serves as the motivation of Kimberlee's Law (HB2311), which would require that those convicted of aggravated or violent rape serve 100% of their sentence with no "time off credit" for good behavior; and

WHEREAS, after working at the Jobs Corps for one year, she completed the requirements to graduate from Messick Adult High School; she then studied briefly at Northwest College in Mississippi before transferring to a college in New York and earning a degree in human services; and

WHEREAS, today, Kimberlee is working on a second degree in psychology and plans to eventually become a family therapist, so that she can give back the compassion and support she has received to others in crisis; and

WHEREAS, Kimberlee humbly believes that her tragedy has brought her closer to God, and that His grace and mercy help her every day in dealing with the pressures of life; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED SEVENTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE CONCURRING, that we hereby honor Kimberlee Morton as an exemplary citizen, professional, and human being, commend her bravery and fortitude in the face of personal tragedy, thank her for her inspiring example to other victims of violent crime, and extend to her our best wishes for much success and happiness in her future endeavors.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.